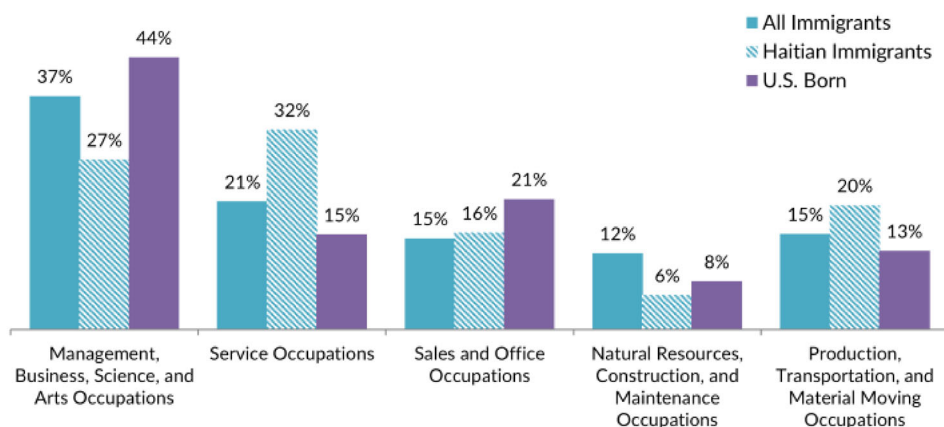


of the native born. Haitians are more likely than all immigrants or the U.S. born to work in service occupations (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Employed Workers in the Civilian Labor Force (ages 16 and older) by Occupation and Origin, 2022



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2022 ACS.

The 103,000 Haitian immigrant health-care workers as of 2021 represented the sixth largest such group in the United States, after those from the Philippines, Mexico, India, China/Hong Kong, and Jamaica. Most Haitian health-care workers are employed in health-care support occupations such as nursing assistants, personal care aides, and home health aides.

Click here for data on immigrants employed in key health-care occupations by region and country of birth.

Income and Poverty

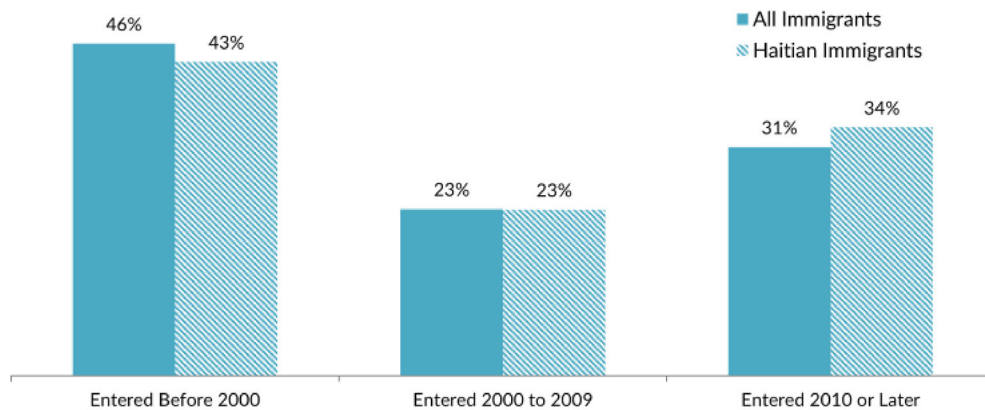
Haitians tend to have significantly lower incomes than the overall foreign- and native-born populations. Households headed by a Haitian immigrant had a median income of \$65,000 in 2022, compared to \$75,000 for both all immigrant and U.S.-born households. Haitian immigrants had roughly similar poverty rates (15 percent) as immigrants overall (14 percent) and higher than the U.S. born (12 percent). (The U.S. Census Bureau defines poverty as having an income below \$29,700 for a family of four in 2022.)

Immigration Pathways and Naturalization

Haitians are much more likely to be naturalized U.S. citizens than immigrants overall. In 2022, 63 percent of Haitians were U.S. citizens, compared to 53 percent of the total foreign-born population.

Compared to all immigrants, Haitians are slightly more likely to have arrived after 2010 (see Figure 7).

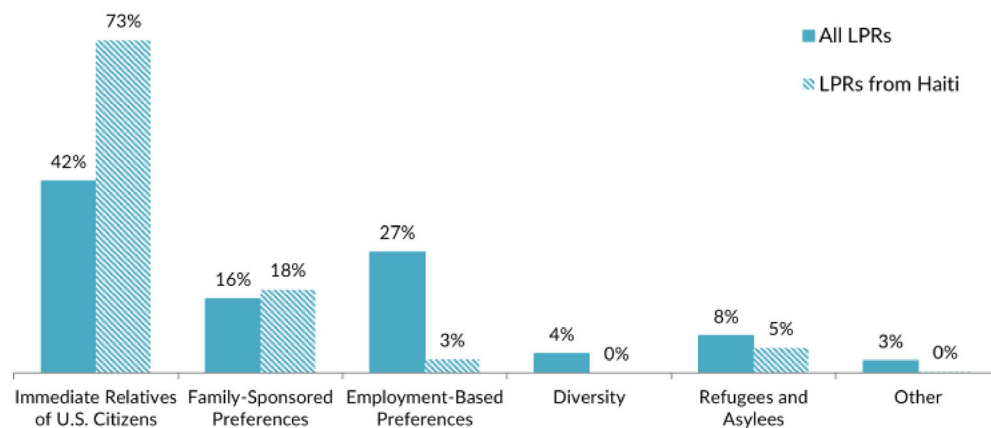
Figure 7. Immigrants from Haiti and All Immigrants in the United States by Period of Arrival, 2022



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.
Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2022 ACS.

Approximately 1 percent (10,400) of the 1 million people receiving lawful permanent residence in FY 2022 were from Haiti. Most Haitians who obtain green cards do so through family reunification. In FY 2022, 91 percent of Haitians receiving a green card did so as either immediate relatives of U.S. citizens or were sponsored by other family members. By comparison, 58 percent of all new lawful permanent residents (LPRs) that year arrived through family pathways (see Figure 8). Just 3 percent of new Haitian green-card holders came through employment sponsorship and 5 percent adjusted their status from being a refugee or asylee.

Figure 8. Immigration Pathways of Haitians and All Lawful Permanent Residents in the United States, 2022



Notes: *Immediate Relatives of U.S. Citizens*: Includes spouses, minor children, and parents of U.S. citizens. *Family-Sponsored Preferences*: Includes adult children and siblings of U.S. citizens as well as spouses and children of green-card holders. The Diversity Visa lottery was established by the Immigration Act of 1990 to allow entry to immigrants from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States. The law states that 55,000 diversity visas in total are made available each fiscal year. Individuals born in Haiti were ineligible for the 2025 lottery. Percentages may not add up to 100 as they are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Source: MPI tabulation of data from Department of Homeland Security (DHS), "Table 10D: Persons Obtaining Lawful Permanent Resident Status by Broad Class of Admission and Region and Country of Birth: Fiscal Year 2022," updated August 21, 2023, available online.

Unauthorized Immigrant Population

Devastation from a massive 2010 earthquake in Haiti prompted the Obama administration to grant TPS to Haitians already in the United States when the disaster hit. The Trump administration sought to terminate the designation, but was stymied by the courts. The attempted termination was reversed by the Biden administration, which subsequently expanded the TPS designation; as of March 2023, 116,500 Haitians held TPS. The latest extension is set to expire August 3, 2024.

Although most Haitian immigrants in the United States are legally present, approximately 99,000 were unauthorized in 2021, according to Migration Policy Institute (MPI) estimates, comprising about 1 percent of the overall estimated 11.2 million unauthorized immigrants.

[Click here](#) for an overview of the 2021 unauthorized immigrant population in the United States.

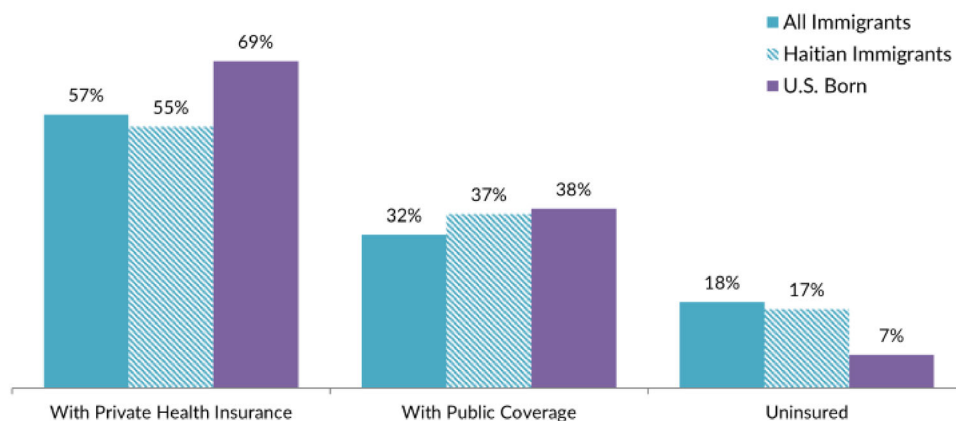
As of March 31, 2023, approximately 120 immigrants from Haiti participated in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, accounting for a tiny share of all 578,700 DACA recipients. DACA provides temporary deportation relief and work authorization to unauthorized immigrants who arrived as children and meet the program's education and other eligibility criteria.

[Click here](#) to view the top origin countries of origin for DACA recipients and their U.S. states of residence.

Health Coverage

In 2022, 17 percent of immigrants from Haiti lacked health insurance, a rate roughly similar to that of all foreign born (18 percent) and much higher than that of the U.S. born (7 percent; see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Health Coverage for Haitian Immigrants, All Immigrants, and the U.S. Born, 2022



Note: The sum of shares by type of insurance is likely to be greater than 100 because people may have more than one type of insurance.
Source: MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2022 ACS.

Diaspora

The Haitian diaspora in the United States was comprised of more than 1.2 million individuals who were either born in Haiti or reported Haitian ancestry or race, according to MPI tabulation of data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2021 ACS. People born in the United States accounted for 508,000 individuals (42 percent) of the U.S.-based Haitian diaspora.

[Click here](#) to see estimates of the top 35 diasporas groups in the United States in 2021.

Top Global Destinations

The United States was the top destination for Haitians living internationally, followed by the Dominican Republic (496,000), as of the most recent, mid-2020 United Nations Population Division estimates. Other top destinations included Chile (237,000), Canada (101,000), France (85,000), and Brazil (33,000). These figures are likely to be an underestimate of the number of Haitians abroad because of the significant post-pandemic migration of Haitians in the Americas.

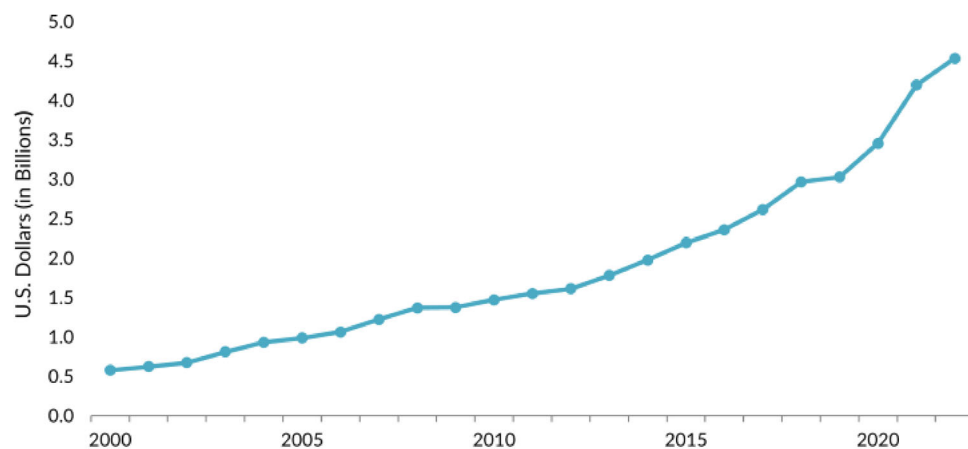
[Click here](#) to view an interactive map showing where migrants from Haiti and other countries have settled worldwide.

Remittances

Global remittances sent to Haiti via formal channels have grown nearly eightfold since 2000, reaching an estimated \$4.5 billion as of 2022, according to the World Bank. Remittances from all origins that year represented

more than 22 percent of Haiti's gross domestic product (GDP).

Figure 10. Annual Remittance Flows to Haiti, 2000-22



Source: MPI tabulations of data from the World Bank Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), "Remittance Inflows," June 2023 update, available online.

Click here to view an interactive chart showing annual remittances received and sent to Haiti and other countries.

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World / Americas

FAA grounds all US flights to Haiti after three planes were struck by gunfire

By [Caitlin Stephen Hu](#), [Michael Rios](#), [Avery Schmitz](#), [Ivana Kottasová](#), [Alexandra Skores](#) and [Pete Muntean](#), CNN

🕒 4 minute read · Updated 5:27 PM EST, Tue November 12, 2024



Travellers walk in front of the Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince in May 2024.
Orlando Barria/EPA-EFE/Shutterstock/File

(CNN) — The United States civil aviation regulator has grounded all flights to Haiti for a month, after three jets from US-based airlines were struck by bullets while flying over Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince, amid escalating gang violence.

A Spirit Airlines plane was hit by gunfire while attempting to land in Port-au-Prince on Monday,
HaitiTPSAR000656

returning from Haiti. An American Airlines flight from Haiti's main airport was also hit by gunfire, according to the airline and a pilot union memo obtained by CNN.

Haitian authorities have already suspended flights in and out of Port-au-Prince for a week. On Tuesday, the US's Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a notice prohibiting US civil aviation operations in Haiti below 10,000 feet, for 30 days.

The United Nations announced Tuesday that its flights were also being grounded. "You will have seen that following a Spirit Airlines was shot at on its final approach at the airport in Port-au-Prince, the airport has now been closed until 18 November," UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric said at a Tuesday briefing.

"As a result, all UN flights have been suspended, obviously limiting the flow of humanitarian aid and humanitarian personnel into the country," he said, adding that the movement of more than a dozen trucks containing critical food and medical supplies to Haiti's south was also postponed.

Haiti's transitional council blamed armed gangs for the gunfire that struck the Spirit flight and pledged to bring the perpetrators to justice, accusing them of aiming "to isolate our country on the international stage."





An image taken from social media shows damage to the interior of the Spirit Airlines plane From Social Media

Haiti has been ridden with widespread gang activity and political chaos for nearly a year, with international actors also impacted by direct violence in recent weeks. Last month, a United Nations helicopter was also hit by bullets while flying over Port-au-Prince. And in a separate incident in October, gangs targeted US Embassy vehicles with gunfire, later prompting the evacuation of 20 embassy staffers.

In late February and early March, coordinated gang attacks forced the closure of both the airport and main seaport in the Haitian capital, choking off vital supplies of food and humanitarian aid to the Caribbean nation.

‘Consistent with gunfire’

On Monday, Spirit said its Flight 951 from Fort Lauderdale in Florida to Port-au-Prince was diverted and landed in Santiago in the Dominican Republic, where “an inspection revealed evidence of damage to the aircraft consistent with gunfire.”

The aircraft has been taken out of service, and Spirit services to Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haitien have been suspended, the airline said.

In response to the Spirit incident, US-based carriers JetBlue and American Airlines temporarily canceled flights to and from Haiti. In a later statement, JetBlue extended its flight suspension through December 2, saying damage from a bullet had been identified in one of its planes returning from Haiti.

JetBlue Flight 935 landed at New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport without any issues originally reported, but a post-flight inspection later identified that the aircraft’s exterior had been struck by a bullet, the airline said.

“We are actively investigating this incident in collaboration with relevant authorities,” JetBlue said, citing “the going civil unrest” for its decision to suspend flights.

And American Airlines said Tuesday it would suspend daily service between Miami and Port-au-Prince through February 12 after it discovered one of its planes was also hit by gunfire. The airline said it inspected flight 819 from Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince after it landed in Miami on Monday. Nobody on board was hurt.

New prime minister

The incidents came the same day Haiti's transitional council swore in a new prime minister, businessman Alix Didier Fils-Aimé, who pledged to restore democracy and security in the country.

Fils-Aimé was formally sworn in as Haiti's new prime minister on Monday in a ceremony attended by various government officials in Port-au-Prince.

"We are in a transition, an immense project. Of course, the essential first project — and one necessary to the success of the transition — is the reestablishment of security!" Fils-Aimé declared at the ceremony, drawing applause from those in attendance.



An image taken from social media shows damage to the exterior of the plane From Social Media

The transitional council tapped Fils-Aimé for the job after eight of its nine voting members signed a declaration on November 8 to replace Garry Conille, who had been in office for less than a year. Copies of the signed declaration were leaked over the weekend and published on the country's official gazette early Monday.

In a statement shared with CNN on Sunday, council member Fritz Jean said the council reached its decision after considering several issues with Conille's tenure as prime minister. Among them, Jean said Conille had made decisions without informing the council and took on the duties of the president, such as engaging in diplomatic affairs.

The United States has said it looks forward to working with Fils-Aimé and the council. But State Department spokesman Matthew Miller also cautioned that Haiti's transitional government should prioritize governance over the "competing personal interests of political actors."

Conille on Tuesday acknowledged the appointment of Fils-Aimé and wished him success. "In this crucial moment, unity and solidarity are essential for our country. Long live Haiti!" he wrote on X.

Conille's predecessor Ariel Henry stepped down earlier this year amid spiraling gang violence.

CNN's Richard Roth contributed reporting.

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WORLD NEWS

Haiti's main airport reopens nearly 3 months after gang violence forced it closed

BY DÁNICA COTO

Updated 10:12 PM EDT, May 20, 2024

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti's main international airport reopened Monday for the first time in nearly three months after relentless [gang violence](#) forced authorities to close it.

The reopening of the Toussaint-Louverture airport in the capital of Port-au-Prince is expected to help ease a critical shortage of medications and other basic supplies. The country's main seaport remains paralyzed. Gangs control 80% of the capital.

U.S.-based airlines are not expected to start using the airport until late May or early June.

The first commercial passenger flight since March left for Miami nearly two hours behind schedule, with sweating passengers complaining about the lack of air conditioning until takeoff. Although the flight was organized by local carrier Sunrise Airways, it contracted Florida-based charter airline World Atlantic, which distributed paper towels to drenched passengers.

As the plane hurtled down the runway and took off, one passenger said in a soft voice, "Yes. Yes."

Before Monday, the sole airport operating in Haiti was located in the north coastal city of Cap-Haitien. It was out of reach for [many](#) seeking to flee the country, with roads leading from Port-au-Prince controlled by gangs that have opened fire on cars and buses passing through.

HaitiTPSAR000668

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Gunfire interrupts meeting of Haiti's leaders trying to fend off gangs

The U.S. government had evacuated hundreds of citizens by helicopter out of a hilly neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, as did nonprofit organizations, as gangs laid siege to parts of the capital.

The attacks began on Feb. 29, with gunmen seizing control of police stations, opening fire on the Port-au-Prince airport and storming Haiti's two biggest prisons, freeing more than 4,000 inmates.

Gangs since then have directed their [attacks](#) on previously [peaceful communities](#), leaving thousands homeless.

More than 2,500 people have been killed or injured in Haiti from January to March, a more than 50% increase compared to the same period last year, according to the United Nations.

At the Couronne Bar near the sole airport gate operating on Monday, 43-year-old manager Klav-Dja Raphael welcomed her first clients. But her smile belied her fear.

"We are scared because they can still attack us here," she said. "We must come in. It's our job, but we're afraid." She recalled how bullets ricocheted through the airport the day it was attacked.

While the airport provided workers at that bar a month's wages, she was left unemployed for the rest of the time, relying on friends and family. She is anxious to join her 13-year-old son who lives in Florida with his father.

Other workers, including those at immigration, were all smiles, content to be finally back at work. "That was a long vacation!" one immigration agent said.

Dozens of people lined up hours before the flight.

"I'm very happy, but it hurts that I'm leaving my husband and my son," said Darling Antoine as her eyes began to water.

She received a visa allowing her to live in the U.S., but the rest of her family is still waiting. They applied because gangs kept encroaching on their neighborhood. "There are heavy gunshots every day," she said. "Sometimes we have to hide under the bed."

Jean Doovenskey, a 31-year-old accountant, left unemployed by the violence, said he was notified in early April that he was authorized to live in the U.S. He will live with his aunt in Florida but hopes to return to Haiti one day and live. "I believe in a new Haiti," he said.

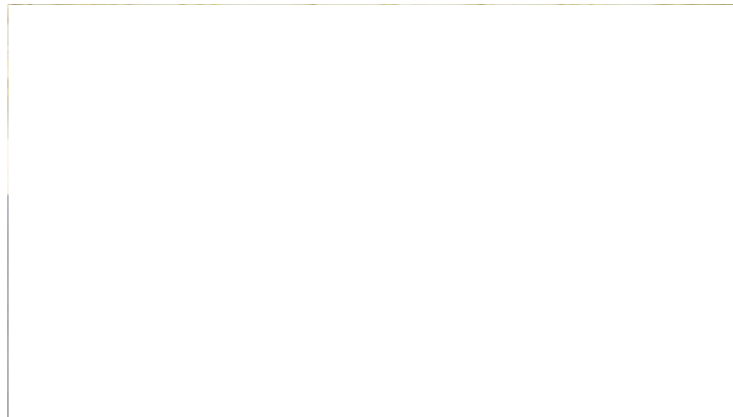
The attack on the [airport](#) also left former Prime Minister Ariel Henry locked out of Haiti since he was on an official trip to Kenya. He has since resigned, and a transitional presidential council is seeking a new prime minister. It is also tasked with selecting a new Cabinet and organizing general elections.

In recent weeks, U.S. military planes have landed at the Port-au-Prince airport with supplies as well as civilian contractors to help Haiti prepare for the arrival of foreign forces expected to help quell the gang violence.

On Sunday, Kenya's foreign affairs principal secretary, Korir Sing'oei, said a plan to deploy police officers from the East African country was in final stages.

"I can tell you for sure that deployment will happen in the next few days, few weeks," he said.

In March, Kenya and Haiti [signed agreements](#) to try to salvage a plan for the country to deploy 1,000 police officers to the troubled Caribbean nation. Other countries expected to back up Kenyan forces include the Bahamas, Barbados, Benin, Chad and Bangladesh. It wasn't immediately clear when those would arrive.



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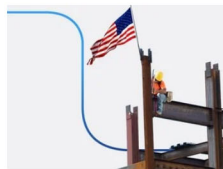
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Backgrounder

Haiti's Troubled Path to Development

Hobbled by foreign interventions, political instability, and natural disasters, the former French colony is paralyzed by multiple crises.

WRITTEN BY

Diana Roy *and* Rocio Cara Labrador

UPDATED

Last updated June 25, 2024 11:40 am (EST)

Summary

Once the wealthiest colony in the Americas, Haiti is now the Western Hemisphere's poorest country, with more than half of its population living below the World Bank's poverty line.

Foreign intervention and debt, political instability, and natural disasters have long stymied development efforts in Haiti, but there are hopes a new prime minister could help stabilize governance.

While the Joe Biden administration has ruled out sending U.S. troops to the island, it has pledged to provide financial support for a UN-authorized, Kenya-led multinational force to fight Haiti's powerful gangs.

Introduction

Few countries have struggled with development like Haiti. Since breaking free from French colonial rule over two centuries ago, the Caribbean state has weathered multiple foreign interventions, chronic political instability, social unrest, and devastating natural disasters. The

confluence of these forces has transformed what was once the wealthiest colony in the Americas into the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

The United States has had a long and troubled history with Haiti, including a nearly twenty-year, sometimes bloody, occupation in the early twentieth century. Despite an often rocky relationship, the two countries maintain close economic and social ties, although bilateral relations have come under increased strain in recent years. During his tenure, President Donald Trump sought to restrict immigration from Haiti, sending thousands of Haitians back on deportation flights. Though President Joe Biden promised a new approach toward the country, he has continued to deport Haitian asylum seekers en masse even as the situation on the island grows increasingly dangerous, challenging U.S. policy on multiple fronts.

What are Haiti's origins?

Spanish settlers arrived on the island of Hispaniola, which comprises modern-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic, in 1492. Within a quarter-century, diseases brought by Europeans, such as smallpox and measles, decimated the Indigenous Taíno population. Over the next three centuries, European colonizers imported hundreds of thousands of enslaved people from western and central Africa to harvest sugar, coffee, and timber—all lucrative exports.

In the early 1600s, French traders established an outpost on the western third of the island, which Paris annexed as the colony of Saint-Domingue several decades later. In the late 1700s, Toussaint L'Ouverture and Jean-Jacques Dessalines, both formerly enslaved, led a rebellion against French rule that culminated with the creation of Haiti in 1804. The first postcolonial Black republic, Haiti became a beacon of abolition, self-determination, and racial equality.



HAITI AT A GLANCE

Area 27,750 sq km (slightly smaller than Maryland)	Primary religions Catholicism 55%, Protestantism 29%, none 10% (2018)	Population 11.6 million (2022)
Life expectancy 63 years (2021)	GDP \$20.3 billion (2022)	Primary languages French, Creole
Form of government Semi-presidential republic	GDP per capita \$1,748 (2022)	

Sources: CIA World Factbook; World Bank.

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What is Haiti's economic situation?

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. More than half the population lives below the poverty line, with limited access to basic services, and many people rely on subsistence farming to feed their families. The country is also heavily dependent on external revenue: between 2010 and 2020, the United Nations allocated more than \$13 billion in international aid for Haiti, most of which has funded disaster-relief missions and development programs. Meanwhile, Haitian remittances have steadily risen over the past two decades, totaling \$4.3 billion in 2023 as the island remains paralyzed by multiple crises.

Since 2010, trade has composed 41 percent of Haiti's GDP on average. The country's major industries include sugar refining, flour milling, and cement and textile manufacturing; textiles accounted for \$1.15 billion, making up 85 percent of all exports in 2021. The United States is Haiti's largest trade partner, followed by Canada and Mexico.

In recent years, natural disasters, disease, political instability, mismanagement of humanitarian relief, and a depreciation of the gourde—Haiti's currency—have strained the economy. Tourism, once a vibrant sector, has declined. Compared to a record 1.3 million tourists in 2018, which drew in \$620 million, Haiti welcomed only 148,000 travelers in 2021, generating around \$80 million in profits. That same year, the neighboring Dominican Republic welcomed five million tourists.

Haiti remains heavily in debt. For example, while international lenders canceled Haiti's debt following a massive earthquake in 2010, since then its total public debt has since risen mostly due to disbursements related to PetroCaribe—the Venezuela-led regional alliance that offers its members subsidized oil. At the end of fiscal year 2021 (FY 2021), Haiti's public debt totaled \$5 billion, or nearly 30 percent of its GDP. Further upheaval, including an escalating protest

movement, the 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, back-to-back natural disasters in July and August 2021, and rampant gang violence have placed further stress on the country's economic situation.

Why has Haiti had such difficulty developing?

Since its independence from France, Haiti's development has been menaced by forces that run gamut, including interference of foreign powers, domestic political malfeasance, natural disasters, social instability, and epidemics.

Foreign intervention and debt. Freedom from France in 1804 did not mean an end to foreign powers intervening in Haiti. France only recognized an independent Haiti in 1825 after its former colony agreed to pay reparations that are estimated to be worth \$21 billion in today's dollars. Over the next 122 years, as much as 80 percent of Haiti's revenues went to paying off this debt.

The United States recognized Haiti only in 1862, when President Abraham Lincoln was championing emancipation at home and abroad. Subsequent U.S. administrations viewed Haiti through a mostly strategic lens. Wary of encroaching German influence in the Caribbean at the outset of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson ordered Marines to Haiti in 1915, purportedly to restore political stability. In the five years prior, seven Haitian presidents were ousted from office or assassinated. During the nearly two-decade occupation, the United States controlled Haiti's security and finances; it also imposed racial segregation, forced labor, and press censorship, and deposed presidents and legislatures that opposed the U.S. presence. Some fifteen thousand Haitians were killed in rebellions against the U.S. administration, the bloodiest of which occurred in 1919 and 1929. President Franklin D. Roosevelt withdrew U.S. troops in 1934 as part of his Good Neighbor Policy.

Political instability. The U.S. withdrawal was followed by a series of unstable governments, which culminated in 1957 with the establishment of a dictatorship under François Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude. Their twenty-nine-year rule was characterized by corruption that drained the nation's coffers and human rights violations that left an estimated thirty thousand people dead or missing. In 1986, massive protests and international pressure forced the younger Duvalier to flee the country, giving way to a new constitution and democratic institutions [PDF].

However, political instability persisted. Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the country's first democratically elected president, was twice deposed in coups, in 1991 and 2004. Both prompted U.S. military interventions supported by the United Nations. In 2004, the United Nations launched a thirteen year peacekeeping mission, the Brazil-led UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) [PD which sought to restore order after the fall of the Aristide government. In 2011, the election of Michel Martelly as president was clouded by allegations of U.S. meddling on his behalf. He later stepped down after postponing presidential elections twice and ruling by decree for more than a year. Haiti was cast into a political vacuum in 2016, when fraud allegations against Martelly's successor, Jovenel Moïse, postponed Moïse's official election until early 2017.

Moïse's presidency saw mass protests and calls for his resignation in response to increased fuel prices and the removal of government subsidies, accusations of corruption, a worsening economic crisis, and dispute over his administration's legitimacy. The widespread social unrest culminated in Moïse's July 2021 assassination. U.S. authorities initially arrested several mercenaries, many of whom had received U.S. military training, on suspicion of involvement in the killing. Eleven people now face charges in a U.S. court in connection to the murder, even as Haiti's own investigation has proceeded slowly; in February 2024, a Haitian judge charged Moïse's widow with complicity in his killing.

Ariel Henry, named prime minister only days before the murder, took over as acting president and came under suspicion after Haiti's chief prosecutor alleged that Henry was in communication with a key suspect. In January 2022, Henry survived an assassination attempt himself. After postponing it several times, the government has committed to holding a general election by August 2025. With gang violence on the island worsening, Haiti and Kenya reached a deal in March 2024 authorizing the deployment of one thousand Kenyan police officers to Haiti as part of a UN-backed multinational stabilization mission, beginning with a contingent of a few hundred officers. In May, a transitional council, created to help form a new government in the wake of Henry's resignation, chose Garry Conille as Haiti's new prime minister. Conille briefly served in the role between 2011 and 2012.

Natural disasters. Located on a geological fault line in a region prone to severe storms, Haiti suffers more natural disasters [PDF] than most Caribbean nations. Widespread deforestation left the country especially prone to flooding and mudslides, and the island is also prone to cyclones, hurricanes, tropical storms, and earthquakes.

A massive earthquake near the capital in 2010, for example, killed about 220,000 Haitians and displaced 1.5 million more. At \$8 billion, basic reconstruction costs surpassed the country's annual GDP. Between 2015 and 2017, drought led to crop losses of 70 percent, and in 2016, Hurricane Matthew decimated the country's housing, livestock, and infrastructure. Haiti was then struck back-to-back disasters in August 2021, when a magnitude 7.2 earthquake rocked the southern peninsula, destroying 30 percent of local homes, killing over 2,000 people, and displacing tens of thousands more. Days later, Tropical Storm Grace exacerbated the destruction, dumping heavy rains and triggering flash flooding and landslides. Inclement and dangerous weather has continued to strike the island as the threat of climate change intensifies.

A number of factors magnify the impact of such disasters, including poor urban planning; substandard infrastructure and housing; large coastal populations; and widespread dependence on subsistence farming, which can degrade the environment if overexploited.

Epidemics and aid mismanagement have further complicated matters. Dengue and malaria run rampant, and cholera, introduced by UN peacekeepers from Nepal after the 2010 earthquake, killed almost ten thousand people and infected nearly one million more. Despite declaring itself cholera-free in 2022, a lack of access to healthcare and other essential services is fueling a resurgence of the disease across the island. At the same time, billions of dollars in aid pledges from governments and organizations following the 2010 crisis are still unaccounted for.

How have recent U.S. administrations approached Haiti?

Washington's stated aims have been to bring political and economic stability to its southern neighbor while easing Haiti's humanitarian distress. The Barack Obama administration focused on strengthening Haiti's national police force, boosting economic security, improving health and education services, and buttressing infrastructure. Under Obama, the United States led the international responses to Haiti's crises, calling the country a "key foreign assistance priority" [PDF] in the Caribbean, and continued to support the United Nations' MINUSTAH mission. Si

the 2010 earthquake, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been Haiti's donor, contributing more than \$5 billion, including millions in support of disaster-risk reduction programs.

On trade, a series of accords struck by President George W. Bush and extended under Obama provide Haitian textiles with duty-free access to the United States. As of 2020, more than 83 percent of all Haitian exports were going to the United States.

Immigration has been a central issue in the U.S.-Haiti relationship. Between 1990 and 2015, the Haitian immigrant population in the United States tripled as Haitians fled political instability and natural disasters, though some previous U.S. administrations responded with harsh detention and repatriation policies. After the 2010 earthquake, Obama granted Haitians temporary protected status (TPS), which affords undocumented migrants from troubled countries the right to live and work in the United States for renewable periods of up to eighteen months. According to the latest American Community Survey, more than one million people of full or partial Haitian descent resided in the United States in 2021, making the country home to the largest Haitian population outside of Haiti.

What did Trump do?

The Trump administration cut USAID's humanitarian and development assistance to Haiti by nearly 18 percent in 2017 as part of broader reductions to U.S. foreign aid, but preserved funding for initiatives to reduce poverty, improve infrastructure and services, and promote democratic institutions. Several trade agreements from the Obama era have likewise endured, including Haiti's duty-free access to U.S. markets, which was among the deals renewed by the Trump administration. When protests erupted across Haiti in 2019, Trump supported President Moïse who faced accusations of political illegitimacy and growing authoritarianism.

At the same time, Trump diverged from his recent predecessors on immigration, particularly with regard to TPS, which he sought to end for many countries. In late 2017, he denied some 59,000 Haitians an extension of their protected status, leading to the deportation of more than 2,500 [PDF] of them between 2018 and 2020. However, Haiti's TPS designation was subsequently extended several times due to legal rulings against the Trump administration's policies, as well as Haiti's ongoing instability.

What is Biden's approach?

Before taking office, President Biden promised a new era of U.S. engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean. However, his response to Haiti's ongoing crises has drawn ire from locals who say the United States has done little to help and spurred calls for stronger action.

In January 2021, the administration announced that it was sending \$75.5 million in development aid and health assistance to Haiti. Following the August earthquake, the administration approved an additional \$32 million in disaster-relief funds and authorized USAID rescue teams to be dispatched to the island. In response to the country's deteriorating political and security situation, the Biden administration revived TPS for an estimated 155,000 Haitians, announcing a new, eighteen-month designation [PDF] in May 2021. (Haiti was again redesignated for TPS beginning in February 2023.)

The administration also contributed another \$50 million to Haiti's recovery fund alongside other UN members during an international aid conference led by the United Nations in February 2022. The United States later designated Haiti a priority country under the 2022 Global Fragility Act, which aims to provide funding to prevent and reduce violent conflict and promote stability in fragile at-risk countries and regions. In March 2023, as part of the Act's implementation process, the White House announced a ten-year strategic plan aimed at fostering stability in Haiti.

Though he lifted Title 42, Biden has maintained some aspects of Trump's border policy. Fearing a migration surge after Title 42 expired in May 2023, the Biden administration unveiled a restrictive new policy that allows the government to deny asylum to migrants who did not previously apply for it in a third country and to those who cross the border illegally. Among those affected by the policy are thousands of Haitian asylum seekers; since Biden took office, more than twenty-seven thousand [PDF] asylum seekers have been deported back to Haiti. To incentivize legal migration, meanwhile, the administration created new humanitarian parole programs for nationals of four Latin American countries, including Haiti.

Some policy analysts have argued that the Biden administration's response in the aftermath of President Moïse's murder was lackluster. Several members of Congress urged Biden to withdraw his support for Prime Minister Henry, arguing that he lacked the political sway needed to organize

elections to determine Haiti's next president. Others in Congress pressed the administration to halt mass deportations of Haitians under Title 42—a practice that drove the U.S. special envoy to Haiti to resign in October 2021.

Meanwhile, the White House continues to rule out sending U.S. troops or additional military assistance to Haiti. However, the United States remains the largest humanitarian donor to Haiti, and USAID has provided the island with more than \$146 million in emergency assistance since 2023. Washington has also pledged to financially back the deployment of the Kenya-led multinational force to help local police fight Haiti's gangs. As the security situation in Haiti rapidly deteriorates, the Biden administration has urged all U.S. citizens on the island to leave, even as deportation flights continue.

Recommended Resources

For the Center for Preventive Action, the University of Michigan's Susan D. Page argues that the United States needs a smarter assistance strategy in Haiti.

Edwidge Danticat looks at the legacy of Haiti's occupation in the *New Yorker*.

The *New York Times*' Matt Apuzzo, Selam Gebrekidan, Constant Méheut, and Catherine Porter analyze how Haiti's current troubles stem from its colonial past.

The Center for Preventive Action tracks instability in Haiti.

Nathalie Baptiste explores the legacy of the Duvalier dictatorships on Haiti and its diaspora for Foreign Policy In Focus and the *Nation*.

The U.S. Institute of Peace's Keith Mines explains the need for an internationally facilitated political process in Haiti.



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Michael Bricknell and Will Merrow created the map for this Backgrounder.

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December 31, 2024 | 9:35 am

TODAY
20th ANNIVERSARY

Insecurity stalls Haiti's tourism growth in 2024



Haiti.- Haiti's ongoing crisis has severely impacted essential sectors such as health, education, and the economy, with tourism among the hardest hit. Insecurity and government inaction have paralyzed the industry, leaving the Ministry of Tourism unable to present a 2024 activity report. Violence and limited access to key destinations have hindered data collection and planning, further exacerbating the decline in visitor arrivals and the government's ability to devise recovery strategies.

Meanwhile, the Dominican Republic has achieved a record-breaking year in tourism, welcoming 11 million visitors in 2024, as announced by Tourism Minister David Collado. This milestone underscores the stark contrast between the neighboring nations on the island of Hispaniola, highlighting the Dominican Republic's economic stability compared to Haiti's challenges.

Haitian tourism entrepreneurs have voiced growing frustration over the lack of effective government measures to address the crisis. The current state of insecurity not only threatens livelihoods but also undermines the potential of tourism as a driver for economic recovery.

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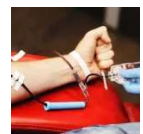
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Mr. Sensible January 1, 2025 9:34 am

Even at the best of times, Haiti is not even on the tourist radar... unless you are a religious group trying to convert the flock.

+ 1 Reply

Franco January 1, 2025 2:18 pm

People talk of haitian recovery as if there was ever a prosperous haiti. The only time it was prosperous was when the french were there as masters.

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Pedrin January 1, 2025 3:56 pm

TODAY



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I'm shocked.

+ 0 — Reply

David January 1, 2025 6:03 pm

Im confused on why you guys continue to post negative stories on Haiti and not understanding the full details of what exactly is going on. I never see this on Haiti news media outlets they dont discuss dominicans every day. Happy independence to Haiti say what you want about the country of Haiti, One day Haiti will raise. Haitians are probably the strongest people on this earth take a note from the bible on your flag and stop painting Haiti in a negative light.

Thank you!

+ 0 — Reply

Dave C. January 9, 2025 10:50 pm

| Reply to David

I don't think the article is intentionally trying to paint Haiti in a negative aspect, it's simply stating facts and reporting the reality. And the interesting this is, back in the 1960's and 70's Haiti had more robust tourism than DR.

+ 0 — Reply

DTO January 7, 2025 10:09 pm

Sispann griyen dan nou sou Ayiti. Que Viva Haiti! Ayiti pap mouri.

+ 0 — Reply

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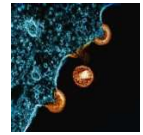
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WORLD NEWS

US and Panama propose new force of 5,550 in Haiti with the power to detain gang suspects



BY EDITH M. LEDERER

Updated 2:33 AM EDT, September 4, 2025

[Leer en español](#)

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States and Panama are urging the U.N. Security Council to authorize a 5,550-member force with the power to detain gang members in [Haiti](#) to help stop the escalating violence.

The two countries outlined their proposal to transform the Kenya-led multinational force now deployed in the Caribbean nation into a much larger force in a draft resolution to the U.N. Security Council obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press.

The first Kenyans arrived in Haiti in June 2024 and the force was supposed to have 2,500 troops, but it has been plagued by a lack of funding and its current strength is below 1,000.

Gangs have grown in power since the [assassination of President Jovenel Moïse](#) in 2021. They now [control 90% of the capital](#), Port-au-Prince, and have expanded their activities, including looting, kidnapping, sexual assaults and rape, [into the countryside](#). Haiti has not had a president since the assassination.

The six-page draft resolution expresses appreciation to Kenya for leading the multinational force but reaffirms Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' finding in February that it hasn't been able to keep pace with the dramatic expansion of the gangs and needed to be scaled up.

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UN authorizes larger force to fight gangs in Haiti



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[Acting U.S. Ambassador Dorothy Shea](#) had announced on Aug. 28 that the U.S. was seeking U.N. authorization for a new Gang Suppression Force.

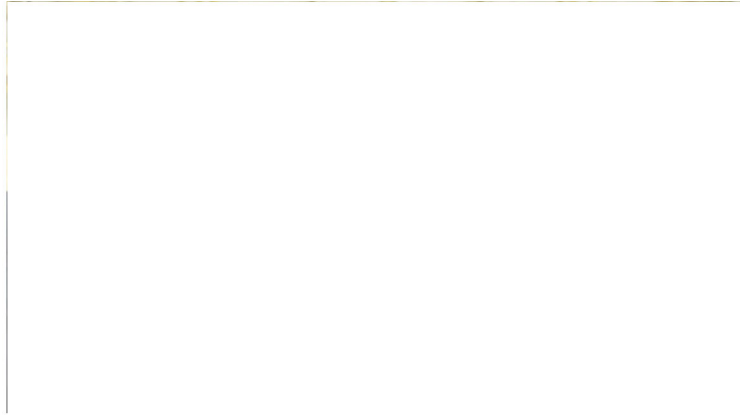
The draft resolution would authorize U.N. member nations to transition the mission into such a force in cooperation with Haiti's government for an initial period of 12 months. The force would be able to detain and arrest Haitians.

It states that the force would consist of 5,500 uniformed personnel and 50 civilians who would be paid from voluntary contributions. But it does not specify whether Kenya or any other country would contribute troops or police.

The resolution would authorize participants in the new force to "conduct independent, intelligence-led targeted counter-gang operations to neutralize, isolate, and deter gangs that continue to threaten the civilian population, abuse human rights and undermine Haitian institutions."

The new force would also provide security for critical infrastructure, including the airport and ports, schools and hospitals, along with the Haitian police and armed forces. And it would support Haitian efforts "to combat illicit trafficking and diversion of arms and related materiel."

The Security Council mandate for the Kenya-led multinational force ends Oct. 2 and council members are expected to vote at the end of the month on the U.S. and Panama draft resolution.



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WORLD NEWS

Haiti's main airport shuts down as gang violence surges and a new prime minister is sworn in

BY EVENS SANON AND MEGAN JANETSKY

Updated 8:48 PM EDT, November 11, 2024

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — Haiti's international airport shut down on Monday after gangs opened fire at a commercial flight landing in [Port-Au-Prince](#), prompting some airlines to temporarily suspend operations as the country swore in a new interim prime minister who promised to restore peace.

The Spirit Airlines flight headed from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to Port-Au-Prince was just hundreds of feet from landing in Haiti's capital when gangs shot at the plane striking a flight attendant, who suffered minor injuries, according to the airline, the U.S. Embassy and flight tracking data. The flight was diverted and landed in the Dominican Republic.

Photos and videos obtained by The Associated Press show bullet holes dotting the interior of a plane.

The shooting appeared to be part of what the U.S. Embassy called "gang-led efforts to block travel to and from Port-au-Prince which may include armed violence, and disruptions to roads, ports, and airports." Spirit, JetBlue and American Airlines said Monday they were canceling flights to and from Haiti.

In other parts of Haiti's capital, firefights between gangs and police broke out. Rounds of gunfire echoed through the streets as heavily armed officers ducked behind walls and civilians ran in terror. In other upper class areas, gangs set fire to homes. Schools closed as panic spread in a number of areas.

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UN Security Council pressures Haiti's leaders to hold election



Doctors Without Borders shuts emergency medical center in Haiti's capital

The turmoil comes a day after a council meant to reestablish democratic order in the Caribbean nation [fired the interim prime minister Garry Conille](#), replacing him with businessman Alix Didier Fils-Aimé. The council has been marked by infighting and three members [were recently accused of corruption](#).

As he was sworn in, Fils-Aimé said his top priorities were to restore peace to the crisis-stricken nation and hold elections, which haven't been held in Haiti since 2016.

"There is a lot to be done to bring back hope" he said before a room of suit-clad diplomats and security officials. "I'm deeply sorry for the people ... that have been victimized, forced to leave everything they own."

The country has seen weeks of political chaos, which observers warned could result in even more violence in a place where bloodshed has become the new normal. The country's slate of gangs have long capitalized on political turmoil to make power grabs, shutting down airports, shipping ports and stirring chaos.

The United Nations estimates that gangs control 85% of the capital of Port-au-Prince, while a U.N.-backed mission [led by Kenyan police](#) to quell gang violence struggles with a lack of funding and personnel, prompting calls [for a U.N. peacekeeping mission](#).

Louis-Henri Mars, executive director of Lakou Lapè, an organization working on peace building in violent areas of Haiti, said the political fighting has "allowed the gangs to have more freedom to attack more neighborhoods in the city and expand their control of Port-au-Prince." Civilians, he fears, will suffer the consequences.

"There will be more lives lost, more internal displacement, and more hunger in a country where half the population is on the brink of starvation," he said.

The transitional council was established in April, tasked with choosing Haiti's next prime minister and Cabinet with the hope that it would help quell violence, which exploded after Haitian President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in 2021.

The council was meant to pave the way to democratic elections, but it has been plagued with politics and infighting, and [has long been at odds with Conille](#), the interim prime minister they hand picked six months ago, who they fired yesterday. Gangs have capitalized on that power vacuum to make their own power grabs.

Conille railed against the council's decision to fire him, calling it an illegal overreach of their powers.

"This resolution, taken outside of any legal and constitutional framework, raises serious concerns about its legitimacy and its repercussions on the future of our country," he wrote in a letter.

Organizations including the Organization of American States tried and failed last week to mediate disagreements in an attempt to save the fragile transition.

On Monday, U.N. spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric urged all involved in Haiti's democratic transition "to work constructively together," although he stopped short of offering an opinion on the move to oust Conille.

"Overcoming their differences and putting the country first remains critical," he said. "What is important is that Haitian political leaders put the interests of Haiti first and foremost."

Associated Press reporter David Koenig contributed to this report from Dallas and Pierre-Richard Luxama, contributed from Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

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MEGAN JANETSKY

Megan Janetsky covers migration, conflict, human rights and politics in Mexico and Central America for The AP based in Mexico City. Previously, she covered Cuba and the Caribbean for The AP and worked as freelance journalist in Colombia, reporting across South America.





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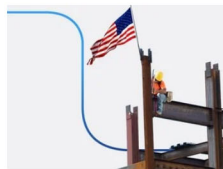
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